



# Yash Chopra honoured with the highest civilian award of France

07 July 2008



*Recognized with Legion d' Honneur for his role as an artiste of cinema and a cultural ambassador*

Yash Chopra, one of modern Indian cinema’s most shining lights, was formally bestowed with France’s highest civilian award, the “Officier de la Legion d’ Honneur” (Officer of the Legion of Honour) at a glittering ceremony in Delhi on 5th July 2008. The French President, Nikolas Sarkozy, had announced this award by decree no. 01D dated 21st January, 2008 and the award was conferred upon Yash Chopra on the 5th of July, 2008. Yash Chopra has thus joined a very select list of awardees, including such luminaries from the Indian cultural sphere as the legendary Satyajit Ray, sitar maestro Ravi Shankar, India’s nightingale Lata Mangeshkar and megastar Amitabh Bachchan.

The letter from the French ambassador, M. Jerome Bonnafont, announcing the award said that it was not just for Chopra’s “contribution to cinema as an art and cultural industry” and his “dedication to promote young filmmakers” but also in recognition of his efforts to foster the spirit of “collaboration between France and India in the field of audiovisual arts.” The distinction also recognized Yash Chopra’s contribution to cultural diversity and making Indian cinema a global force to reckon with.

Even though awards are not new to him, Yash Chopra was delighted to receive the highest honour of a country where arts and culture are central to the way of life. Reacting to the award he said, “I am honoured to be recognized by the Republic of France as a cultural ambassador for my country. I am very glad that our efforts at making Indian cinema a global phenomenon are being saluted by France, a country that has itself a long and glorious history as a nation of passionate lovers of art and culture. I accept this award humbly and thank President Sarkozy for deeming me worthy of his nation’s highest honour.”



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